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OCTOBER, 1902.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The *New York Medical Journal*, in commenting editorially on the address in surgery of the British Medical Association, delivered by Mr. A. W. Mayo Robson, is pained **SURGICAL ENGLISH.** that certain flaws in the diction should have been permitted to creep in. "In St. Thomas's there was 1 ovariectomy, which died, and there were 14 herniotomies, of which 8 died." "Up to 1883 every case of intraperitoneal rupture of the bladder had died, but in that year Sir William MacCormac operated on and saved two lives." This is the same old thing that some of us have been fighting against for years. Beyond question, a case cannot die, nor can an operation meet with the same fate; it is equally absurd to speak of a life being operated upon. Yet these and worse errors are becoming so common that they almost cease to attract notice. This very journal, in the same issue, contains papers in which the misuse of "case," where patient is intended, occurs. There will soon have to be a recognized brand of English, probably called "Surgical English", in which the ordinary conventions of the language will be disregarded, men may talk of "operating this case", or "seeing this case in consultation", and commit the other abominations which seem to be borrowed from German syntax and may possibly be used as indicative of a more or less limited acquaintance with that country or its language.

The *Kentucky State Medical Association Bulletin* has been established as the official publication of the Association, and has **READING NOTICES.** reached its third issue. We are certainly glad to see another addition to the number of state association journals, for in time these publications will prob-

ably do away with a large number of the cheap and vile so-called "medical journals" that have come up all over the country and thrive on discreditable advertising. Many of these "journals" are owned, body and soul, by one or more nostrum manufacturers, and they are used to aid in debauching the minds of a certain percentage of physicians. It is not easy, unless one knows or has had much experience, to tell the sheep from the goats, and the "reading notice" giving a large sized endorsement of some nostrum may be as well written and read quite as entertainingly as a proper and scientific editorial in some other and reputable journal. A few new remedies are excellent, have an unquestioned value, and are such as to tempt one to occasionally speak a word of commendation. Yet these are comparatively few, whereas the great mass of preparations concerning which "reading notices" are published are either worthless or out and out nostrums, not fit for any man to use or prescribe. Because these things are true, all reputable medical journals, and especially the official publications of state medical societies, should absolutely refuse to print in their reading pages any sort of advertising matter—and the "reading notice" is advertising. The *Kentucky State Association Bulletin* contains a "reading notice," and without in any way reflecting upon the value or the worthlessness of the thing so advertised, we do not like to see it. We certainly cannot ask private journals, operated for profit, to "please be good", when the official publications of medical societies commit the offences which the medical profession desires to have corrected.

The poor W. C. T. U. has had another spasm, due to a severe shock to its sense (?) of propriety. The lovely old ladies who **ANOTHER SPASM.** cannot reason logically are decidedly opposed to letting the West Point cadets smoke; perhaps it is feared the cadets' brains will not develop beyond the caliber of the W. C. T. U.; perhaps there is some other reason. They managed to have an order passed prohibiting smoking by cadets. But when the question was investigated, the officials at West Point had the order rescinded, on the very just ground that the cadets would smoke anyhow, and that it was better for them to smoke pipes and cigars openly than to be led into breaking rules and smoking cigarettes secretly. A law that can not be enforced is a harmful law, for it teaches disobedience. We all know that sumptuary laws are more commonly honored in the breach than in the performance, and most of us would be quite sure that a non-smoking rule at West Point could not be enforced in the slightest degree. The increase of drunkenness following the abolition of the army canteen is well known to